



Land Development News
July 2008
County of San Diego, Department of Public Works

Land Development

Meet the Land Development Staff:

Rene Vidales - Civil Engineer - Project Conditioning Team Member

Rene recently joined the DPW Land Development Team from the private industry. Rene has extensive land development experience in San Diego and Phoenix, Arizona communities. Rene is now assigned to the East Team under the leadership of Ken Brazell as Civil Engineer conditioning private development projects. The East Team covers projects within the communities of Ramona, Julian, Borrego, Lakeside, Descanso, Pine Valley, San Pasqual Valley, and North Mountain area.

PDCI's Project Closure Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR) Implementation

After much work, we have posted the new process enhancements from the latest Private Development Construction Inspection BPR on the County's website. The results can be seen at <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dpw/land/pdci.html>. The specific new information posted is as follows:

- 1) "Do you need a construction plan change or can you record plan it?" - This document provides some clarifications on the Department of Public Works (DPW) thresholds for the need for a formal plan change for a field change versus being allowed to include it as part of the record plan process. For any field change concerns that impact the approved plans, please review and coordinate with your project inspector to ensure you are following the correct process to handle the change. Depending on the field change, there may be some cases where exceptions in either direction may apply but will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- 2) Rough Grade Process and Information and FAQs - The rough grade process is very critical to the development of a project. A checklist has been provided in an attempt to make sure the developer has addressed and provided all the necessary information for DPW inspector to be able to perform the rough grade inspection without delay. In addition a FAQs sheet was generated to answer general question developers may have with our process. These two new documents were implemented to make the process more transparent, and it should to allow quicker rough grade releases by having all required information completed in advance.

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PDCI's Project Closure Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR) Implementation cont.

3) Preliminary and Final Punchlists - We understand the anxiousness to get through the tail end of the project to finally get project closure. Please know that DPW's final checks are very important to us to ensure the project meets all the project requirements, and the punchlists can be long and tedious. Information has been provided on PDCI's punchlist process for project closeout to help prepare you for this event. A new punchlist template has been provided to show what a typical one looks like. Over the years, there have been various formats, and this is an attempt to standardize it. We have made changes in our current process to allow project record plans to be approved if all "line and grade" issues have been addressed. All other remaining issues would still be required to be completed prior to project closure. Information on the "line and grade" thresholds have also been provided.

We hope this information will provide clarity of our process and assist in making it easier. If you have additional questions, please contact your inspector through PDCI's front counter (858) 694-3165 or contact the inspector directly.

Project Closure

The County Board of Supervisors passed a new Land Development deposit and fee schedule effective July 1, 2008. The schedule can be found on the Department of Public Work's website at the following page: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dpw/land/deposits.html>.

Despite Downturn in Economy, Survey Mapping Still Relatively Strong

Despite the overall downturn in San Diego County's housing market, the County Surveyor reported that the survey mapping for records of surveys and corner records is still going strong. "I would have expected far fewer filings under the circumstances" said County Surveyor, Terry Connors. "I believe the higher numbers indicate that a lot of Surveyors and Engineering Firms are reducing their backlog of unfilled records."

During Fiscal Year 2007-08, the County Surveyor and his staff saw only a 5% drop in the number of filed records of survey over the same time last fiscal year with 476 vs. 501 maps. There was a slightly larger drop of 9% for corner records over the same time last fiscal year with 1230 vs. 1352. "I'm not going to complain because I rather see them finally filed than sit in someone's desk drawer and never see the light of day", said Terry. "With a forecast for a continued slump in the market, it will be interesting to see where we are this time next year."

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Low Impact Development and Stormwater

Stormwater pollution is commonly considered the nation's number one water quality problem. As such, stormwater issues increasingly have become a key consideration in land use planning and development during the last several years in San Diego County. Under the newly adopted San Diego Municipal Stormwater Permit, revised January 24, 2007, new requirements have been established to further reduce the pollution that runs down storm drains into local waterways. Jurisdictions within the County are mandated by the Permit to comply with these stormwater requirements. The most notable requirement will be to implement "Low Impact Development" (LID) for new and redeveloped projects.

LID is a stormwater planning practice that uses decentralized, site-based planning and design strategies to manage the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff. LID attempts to reduce the amount of runoff by mimicking the natural hydrologic function of the site. By focusing on minimizing impervious surfaces and promoting infiltration and evaporation of runoff before it can leave the location of origin. Using small, economical landscape features, LID techniques work as a system to filter, slow, evaporate, and infiltrate surface runoff at the source.

An LID Handbook was prepared by the County's Department of Planning and Land Use and adopted in January, 2008. The LID Handbook describes techniques and strategies to use from site assessment and planning through implementation, and is designed to assist public and private developers with a selection of design features or BMPs. As part of the revised Permit, San Diego jurisdictions must encourage developers to incorporate minimal LID techniques into development projects during the next year, as well as collectively establish feasibility and applicability criteria and develop specific LID requirements during the next 18 months. Once specific criteria and requirements have been established, the jurisdictions will have one year to incorporate the requirements into their local codes and ordinances. Therefore, by the year 2010, the County and other local jurisdictions will each have an updated Stormwater Program with a comprehensive list of BMPs, including the new LID requirements. The LID handbook (series of three booklets) can be found at:

<http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/docs/LID-Handbook.pdf>

<http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/docs/LID-Appendices.pdf>

<http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/docs/LID-Literature-Index.pdf>